

# RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

"PROVE ALL THINGS; HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."—Paul.

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## RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

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REV. JOHN BISBE, JR.—EDITOR.

## HISTORICAL.

FOR THE RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

### ROMISH AND PROTESTANT CHURCHES UNITING.

NO. 2.

*Mr Editor.*—In a former number, I endeavored to exhibit some of the signs of the times, which point towards an approximation of the Protestant and Romish Churches. In this, I purpose to continue the parallelism, and to show by analogical deductions, that whatever may be the pretences, or whatever the terms of approbrium in fashion, in speaking of the 'Mother church,' still, their amalgamation is indicated, as written 'with the point of a diamond' and is approaching to its consummation with the steady march of time. The wheels of revolution rarely retrograde; and judging that certain causes will, in similar circumstances produce similar effects, I dare to foretell with confidence, that the alliance, to which I have already alluded, is near, even at the door.

Among the devices forming the system of clerical legerdemain in use among the Catholics, is the assumption of miracles, as being wrought in favour of their tenets. This device has prevented the veil of mystery from being rent from top to bottom. No dogma has appeared too absurd to stand the test of this ordeal, and no abomination has been too great to be thus sanctioned. No Protestant of much information will doubt this, as applied to the Romish Church, and *facts* will evince that the same device is practised, even in this enlightened age, by the Protestant church, and for the same object. In Tract No. 155, published by the American Tract Society, two miracles are recorded relative to conversions; and such is the connexion in which they stand, that, the obvious intent of the writer is to hold up a clergyman or two, as the *media* thro' whose prayers these miracles were wrought. Other tracts, and numerous publications relate a variety of similar transactions, imputed to supernatural agency. Among a variety of this description, on which my eye is fixed, I will extract from one published in the Evangelical Magazine for Nov. 1794, printed in London. It is related of a Mr. Grimshaw, an Epis-

copal clergyman for a number of years before this singular conversion.

"As soon as he was set down, he found his arms from above his elbows, and his legs from above his knees, cold as death. Those about him kept rubbing them with a supply of hot cloths, more than an hour, but he gat no heat. While this was doing, he was sitting all the while with his face erect, with his eyes open, and lifted up to the ceiling, fell into a trance, in which he saw a dark foul passage, into which he must go; and being entered, saw a very high wall on the right hand, on the other side of which was heaven, and another on the left hand, on the other side of which was hell. He heard, or rather overheard, somewhat of a conference, betwixt God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ concerning him, and for a long time it seemed to go hard against him; for God the Father would have him to be damned—but the Lord Jesus pleaded for him.—At last he evidently saw the Lord Jesus thrust down his hands and feet, as it were below the ceiling, while he remarked that the nail holes were ragged and bluish, and streamed with fresh blood. Instantly he was filled with joyful assurance; his arms and legs grew comfortably warm, he rose up and found himself perfectly well, was filled with joy in the Holy Ghost, and cheerfully performed the afternoon service."

Besides the blind respect, which assumed miracles obtained for the Romish clergy, they gave them an almost unlimited control over the purse-strings of a superstitious and priest-ridden people. Let *facts* testify whether the same effects have, or have not followed similar impositions on the understandings of Protestants. That exceptions to this rule occur, is only proof of the general proposition. Sects, in Protestant countries, often split as widely as possible, for other reasons than a full persuasion of the truth of their tenets, and the *arcana imperii* are as well understood in the formation of religious *fashions*, as in any of the operations of political policy in states and kingdoms. Hence the reason why certain *accelerating measures* for the grand catastrophe, to which I have alluded, are more tardily adopted in some sects than in others.—That the same *gravitating cause* is, however, secretly at work in *all* the sects, which hold to certain *essentials*, is as evident to the mind of the writer, as the light of the midday sun.

It is well known that the Papists hold, that out of their church is no salvation. They maintain, however, that men are judged in another world, according to their deeds in this; so do Protestants.—But the moment a *heretic* is proved to have *deserved heaven* by their own principles, he can only

*Ms. Beebe*

obtain it by joining their church. This is also the pith and marrow of modern Protestant orthodoxy.—In the tract already noticed is a case in point. Two men are there represented as about going down to an endless hell for *not believing in the dogmas of John Calvin*, for no other reason is even hinted at as the cause of danger. They are represented as uncommonly amiable and moral, and in a state of reconciliation with God. But they were out of the church and consequently out of the ark of safety.

It is thus that heresy in opinion is considered as worse than vice, and that the only state of salvation is a state of belief in a decree, which is termed by the celebrated reformer, a *horrible decree!*

Papists insist on the infallibility of the Pope, and of course, that he cannot do wrong. Hence the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance. Protestants do not indeed claim that it is impossible for them to do wrong, but they claim for councils, composed of men confessedly fallible as individuals, a certainty of thinking and doing right. On this principle, the Synod of Dort, who sat in judgment on the opinions of James Arminius, condemned Barneveldt, who stood in his room, to die on the scaffold, in conformity to the cruel principles and sanguinary conduct of the founder of their order, *the murderer of Servetus*.

Popish leaders forbid the use of the scriptures to the laity, as endangering their salvation. Protestant leaders grant the use of the scriptures, with an interdictment on the understanding of them, under the pains and penalties of anathemas in this world, and the never ending and insufferable torments of a lake of quenchless fire in another. It is possible that some may perceive a distinction in these cases, but the difference of principle in the two cases remains to be pointed out.

Having noticed the importance of Calvinistic sentiments, attached to certain cases, it may be supposed that these are the sentiments on which the clergy preach, from which they start, and to which they recur. Nothing is, however, farther from the truth. They remain in creeds and confessions, and occasionally come in for a share of honor on particular occasions, merely as a bar to the salvation of heretics or infidels.

When I commenced on this subject, my intention was to close my remarks upon it in the first essay. Finding the subject strengthened by examination, I purposed to extend it to a second number, and now that a second is written, long enough for one publication, without occupying all the ground which I had contemplated, I shall reserve the conclusion to a succeeding number.

Yours in the truth,

PETER.

## DOCTRINAL.

FOR THE RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

*Mr. Editor*.—In conversation with my limitarian brethren, it is not unfrequently the case, that they *roundly* assert, (which is perfectly consistent with the creed they

have subscribed,) that the design of Deity, in sending his Son into the world, was only to benefit a part of mankind, and that the non-elect, (as they are pleased to call a part of the human family) have no part in the economy of God's spiritual grace. And if I tell them, the word of God says to the contrary, and adduce lucid evidence in support of my assertion, they will fly in the face of the most plain and positive declaration that can be made, and reply, No, you do not rightly understand it, for *all* does not mean *all*, the *whole* means only a *part*, *every man* means *every converted or regenerated man*, the *whole world* means the *elect world*, etc. If I contend it is not reasonable to believe that a God of infinite benevolence created a race of beings, part of whom he would render ceaselessly and infinitely wretched, they reply, that I have nothing to do with reason in matters of religion. But without attempting to refute this absurd notion, which, in the eyes of the candid and reflecting carries its own refutation upon the very face of it, I will proceed to consider some of the objections urged against the doctrine of universal happiness.

1. "It leads to licentiousness." I will with pleasure meet my limitarian brethren upon this ground, as I firmly believe it produces holiness of heart and life, when it is rightly understood; I will therefore attempt to prove it. In pursuing this subject, I will inquire, what is true morality? Our Saviour answers the important question. "*Love God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself.*" This is a law, the existence and obligation of which are co-extensive with the being and reason of man; it is one which grows out of the reason and nature of things,—and therefore binds every moral creature in the universe of God.—Reader, which of the two doctrines is most likely to produce this obedience, and conformity of heart to those sacred precepts, the *partial*, or *universal*? The former presents to our view a Sovereign, who has ushered into being a vast number of intelligences, some of whom he will finally receive to realms of unalloyed felicity, while the remainder he will consign to endless and inexpressible misery. And for the non-elect, there is no possible way of escape, as their fate was thus decreed from all eternity! While the latter, the universal, exhibits a glorious Being, whose very nature is love, and "whose tender mercies are over all his works," who has created a numerous family of rational beings, capable of loving, serving and enjoying him forever, and who has created them for the express purpose of manifesting his own glory in their ultimate and everlasting happiness. And this Being is not only willing, but abundantly able to carry his every purpose into effect. Now it would seem almost useless to inquire which of these has the greatest tendency to produce obedience to the first requisition, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart?

I will now proceed to inquire, which of the two doctrines, in the reason and nature of things, is best calculated to produce obedience to the second precept of the divine law, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. For neighbor means the *whole race of Adam*.



The partialists say there is a vast number of our species, who are not only in a state of alienation from God, but who will remain in this state to all future eternity; and after death shall have finished the living scene with them here on earth, they will be fixed in such a condition of despair and wretchedness, that they will be increasing in rebellion and wickedness through endless ages. While the Universalists, with much grief, witness the unreconciliation of many of their erring brethren to the Father of mercies, and are ready to exclaim in the language of the prophet of the most high God, "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people;" yet they sorrow not as those who have no hope, for hope, even the sweetest hope that can warm the human breast is theirs, as "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." The Almighty says, by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, "I have sworn by myself, the word has gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely shall say, in the Lord, have I righteousness and strength." Believing these testimonies, we can encircle the whole family of man with our affection, as brethren united under one head, ("Christ, who is the head of every man,") and rejoice in the glorious prospect of that law, which is the transcript of the divine nature, being fulfilled, in its every jot and tittle, by all the children of Adam, in that celestial state, where we shall be completely free from all our filthiness, idolatry, envy and all sin. But, on the other hand, it is morally impossible that we should ever *love* our neighbors as ourselves, when we believe them to be the enemies of God and the heirs of eternal perdition. Some other objections will be considered in a future number.

Z. F.

FOR THE RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

**WILLINGNESS TO BE DAMNED.**

It is held by many, that if any one wish to receive salvation at the hand of God, he must, first of all, be "willing to be damned." It has been declared from the pulpit that this is the fact; that none, except those who are willing to be cast off forever, can be saved.

When such an idea is advanced, we are naturally led to inquire *cui bono*, and what consistency is discoverable in this doctrine? In the preaching of the idea or doctrine above stated, we are able to discover neither consistency nor benefit. It appears to us that it is somewhat inconsistent for a man to urge his hearers, by all their love of happiness, and by all their dread of misery, to "flee for refuge to Christ," that they may escape the "wrath to come," and in the next breath inform them that it is necessary for each to be perfectly "willing to be damned." Will this willingness "to be damned" be likely to induce men to strive to obtain salvation? Is it not extremely inconsistent to place in connexion two ideas so opposite as these? How-

ever, those, who advance these ideas, evince no small degree of artfulness in one respect, for they are careful that their hearers shall not be convinced too soon that it necessary to be "willing to be damned," as this would destroy the intended effect; this is therefore kept out of sight, until they are inquiring what they must do to be saved; then, if the preacher be confident that their passions are sufficiently excited, and their minds so far blinded, that they will not discover the absurdity of the idea, he gravely informs them, that in order to be saved, they must "be willing," &c. So much for the consistency of this idea.

We next inquire, where is its advantage? If the salvation of man depend on his own works, will this "willingness" cause him to exert himself to obtain it? Will it not rather render him indifferent as to the event? On the other hand, if salvation be of "grace," and not of works, then we ask what possible difference can it make as to the event, whether man be or be not "willing to be damned?" unless this "willingness" might reconcile him to his situation, should he chance to be cast off.

But this doctrine appears to us, as not only useless, in regard to the final salvation of man, but as licentious in its tendency in this life. If man believe, (as many do,) that sin is not punished in this world, and if he be perfectly "willing to be damned" in that which is to come, what will hinder him from sinning? It cannot be the fear of punishment here, for this is not believed to be inflicted; it cannot be the fear of punishment hereafter, or in other words, of "endless damnation," for this he is "willing" to endure, and it surely cannot be the love of God, because he is equally as willing to blaspheme his name to all eternity, as to sing his praises in heaven. This appears from the consideration, that it is generally held by the believers in "endless misery," that those, who are in torment, will continually blaspheme God; if then man be "willing to be damned," it follows that he is willing to blaspheme God eternally, therefore love to God can have no possible influence on his actions. Man then may say, I will sin when I choose, and if I go to heaven, why, it is well, and if I am sent to hell, it is just as well,—I am altogether willing. In the one case, I can praise God—in the other, I can blaspheme him, and both will be equally pleasant. Does not this doctrine appear inconsistent, useless and licentious? LUCIUS.

ODIN, or *Woden*, the divinity of the ancient Saxons, Normans, Scandinavians, and Danes, who were the ancestors of the present British nation and of the Anglo-Americans. They painted him as the god of *terror*, the author of *devastation*, the father of *carriage*; and they worshipped him accordingly. They sacrificed to him, when successful, some of the captives taken in war; and they believed those heroes would stand highest in his favor who had killed most enemies in the field; that after death, the brave would be admitted into his palace, and there have the happiness of drinking beer (the favorite liquor of the northern nations,) out of the *skulls* of their slaughtered foes. The fourth day of our week, or *Wednesday*, took its name from this heathen deity, called *Wodin* by the Saxons.

Russell.

Let us consider whether we do not worship the God of

our ancestors, and whether, though christians in name, we be not heathens in feeling and conduct. If any person question whether Woden be adored in this country, let him look at Mr. Sabine's statement, and he will find a God *crucified* as the grave. If there be any choice between this being and Woden, Thor and Chiven, it is in favor of the latter.



## RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

SATURDAY APRIL 23, 1825.

*"Earnestly contend for the faith."*

### RELIGION AND HAPPINESS.

*"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength, and with thy whole mind; and thy neighbor as thyself."*

Long and angry disputations have been held on the law of God, its sanctions and rewards, and the duty and destiny of man; but although much has been written on these great subjects, deep ignorance still clouds the understanding of the majority, requiring that clear and strong delineations of God's character and purpose should be made, that all may love him, and each the other according to the heavenly injunction. If it be right for men to love God, he, in requiring the affection of an undivided heart, has made a righteous claim, and consequently, should he give up his demand on the human soul, he would virtually acknowledge his indifference to holiness, or his approval of sin. He cannot therefore surrender his claim to supreme love and homage without admitting its unreasonableness, or his incapacity to enforce it. Neither result can be allowed, for either conclusion would deeply implicate the character of God. If righteousness will sustain his demand through eternity, he must either obtain that which justice requires, or feel that his claim is one, which he can never enforce. Should the first supposal accord with truth, God will receive his right, for all men will love him with the whole soul, and each the other as himself; but should the second be the fact, God would never receive his due, nor would men ever become a family of brothers. It hence appears, that unless the law of God goes into universal operation, he cannot be honored as he deserves; but the scriptures affirm that he will not surrender his glory, and that one jot or tittle shall not pass from the law unfulfilled. It is urged, however, that the penalty of the law will be inflicted in the future state, and that it will absolutely prevent compliance with its demands. Should this be the case, God would be effectually robbed of his due by means of his own appointment, the claim and sanction of the law would forever conflict, and weakness, misrule and wretchedness

characterize the government of Heaven. For it might as rationally be contended that the reward of virtue will prevent man from loving God, as that the punishment of guilt will render it impossible. If God chastize transgressors to honor his law, they must be reclaimed, or the purpose of correction cannot be answered. But if the law can be magnified and rendered glorious by violating or disregarding it, no one, who loves God, and who wishes to see him adored, will feel himself under any obligation to comply with a single injunction of his Maker. It is never asserted that those, who will suffer the penalty of the law through eternity, are released from its solemn demand of obedience, but it is contended that their merited punishment will forever put it out of their power to comply. This then is the harmony of that law, which infinite wisdom, boundless love and almighty power have framed, and on the fulfilment of which the glory of God and the happiness of man are staked. Who can discover either benevolence or understanding in a lawgiver, who inflicts a punishment to honor his authority, with the clearest perception that the delinquent will not be reclaimed, but that he will become a more obstinate and daring rebel under his chastizing rod? Is this the economy of Heaven, and does it receive honor both from those who break, and those who keep its law?

What will glorify the law of Heaven? If any thing but obedience, the apostle mistook, when he said, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. It then appears, that eternal punishment, which takes away both ability and disposition to love God and man, can never honor the great Legislator, magnify his law, or promote the happiness of his subjects. If neither of these ends can be effectuated by its infliction, why should it be imposed on a single creature? Paul, certified of the benevolence of God's plan and the efficacy of his means, declares, that he punishes that we might be partakers of his holiness; but the scheme of endless ruin is directly opposed to this doctrine. All these considerations go to show the inconsistency of endless sin and suffering with God's love of purity and bliss, the integrity of his law, and the peace and unity of his moral empire. Should any portion of our race endure an eternity of torment, they would be monuments of God's disinclination or inability to reclaim them, and constantly evidence his preference of vice to virtue, or his incapacity to accomplish the desires of his heart. But laying all these strange and incompatible consequences out of the account, can we dream of any thing better calculated to disgrace God and ruin his moral creation, than a law, the commanding part of which enjoins universal love, and the punishing part of which forbids it in every creature, and forever? If this be perfection, let the kings and counselors of earth copy this legislation as far as their means extend, and outlaw each offender, and hunt him into the grave for his first crime. From all the attention we have been able to give this subject, this conclusion is unavoidable, God will not counteract his own requirements by com-



manding every creature to love him, and preventing the exercise of this feeling, and robbing himself of his due, by the infliction of eternal agony. This being our deep conviction, we ask those, who entertain an opposite belief, to show the inconclusiveness of our reasoning.

In the last place, can God appear as glorious in the eyes of men and angels, if his law be everlastingly broken and cursed, as he would, if it were loved and obeyed by each rational being in the universe? If the gloriousness of God's character suffer no eclipse from the infraction of a law, which requires the whole love of the whole heart, what deed would cast a shade over his perfections, or require a severe, though a disciplinary punishment? If the endless sin and misery of an individual would reflect no disgrace on a command, which enjoins love, and confers happiness on the obedient, the sin and suffering of every creature would not dishonor this requirement; hence, if one eternal blasphemer neither prostrate the dignity of God's law, nor draw a veil over his character, a universe of ingrates and rebels would neither degrade nor disgrace one nor the other, but God would appear as glorious in their sight, as though they loved and adored him. But should the disobedience and ingratitude of one implicate the character of God, the degree of ignominy, which he might experience, would depend on the number of the rebellious and the unthankful. It necessarily follows from this reasoning, that each sinner on earth falls short of glorifying God, or that here and hereafter he is honored by being disregarded and contemned, and by having his law and authority trampled in the dust. This being the fact, no person should love God, or keep his commands, lest he might disgrace the most perfect of beings. But he should rejoice to hear him blasphemed, and loaded with eternal obloquy and reproach, as this will give him a foretaste of the coming world, and furnish a specimen of God's immortal glory.

We hence conclude God has not framed a law, which is to be forever violated, and that the glory of his character and the happiness of his kingdom are staked on its universal observance. That whoever can delightedly anticipate an eternity of rebellion against the Being he professes to love, can rejoice to see him disgraced, and his law, which is the result of infinite wisdom and goodness, given to the winnowing winds. And that if disobedience as highly extol the perfection of God, and as clearly manifest the righteousness and dignity of his law as dutifulness and love, no one is under any obligation to revere God, or benefit his race, in order to honor his Creator. These awful consequences result from the admission, that the endless violation of God's law will never disgrace him or it.

Our position is, that man was formed to keep the commands of his God, that happiness is procurable in no other way, that the moral excellence of God's character depends on the observance of his law, and that man will glorify his Maker by loving and enjoying him forever. If the reverse of these statements can be demonstrated, all these horrible conclusions would follow, which have already been consid-

ered. Let it then be well remembered, that, if scripture reason and history can throw any light on the subject, the friends of God should never lament the prevalence of vice, should never pray for the conversion of sinners, nor make an effort to check the indulgence of the most bitter hatred against Heaven and earth, for as God is now magnified, and will be through eternity by these means, those, who love him, should never interfere to darken his character, or limit the sphere of his glory. We have carried our reflections to this extent, that the legitimate effects of endless rebellion might be palpably obvious, and that it might be clearly seen that the honor of God and the happiness of man are inseparably conjoined. For if man can be felicitous without honoring God, or if God can be honored unless man be happy, our reasoning has led us into a great mistake. But as the Creator formed man for his pleasure, which is the hearty observance of his paternal requirements, he must have created him for happiness, as duty and enjoyment are indivisible. Did God intend that any man should hate his Creator and his fellows forever, his purpose and command would be in direct opposition, and the discordancy of his character be terrifically prominent. We shall now leave this topic with observing, that unless God will be glorified by being hated forever, his law must go into unlimited and joyous operation; but if hatred constitute his glory, he has commanded what he neither wished nor expected to realize.

1. What is the duty of a man who *was created* for eternal rebellion against God?
2. What is the duty of a man, who, *God knows*, will eternally rebel against him?
3. What is the duty of the man, who *is created* to obey God, and who will love and enjoy him forever?

### MORAL INDECISION.

*"I know the right, and I approve it too,  
Detest the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue."*

Preachers and writers on moral subjects have found less difficulty in convincing the understanding than in melting the heart, for although a few tears might fall and a strong impression be felt at the time of hearing or reading, its influence has been short, and unproductive of the expected good. Many people listen to a song, which describes the joys of virtue or the misery of guilt in the most simple and affecting manner, till they deeply feel the horror or happiness which is portrayed, and go their way, and forget what manner of persons they are, or should be. Preaching, writing and conversation have the same effect on the heart, and fail in producing the intended change of life, as their impressions are effaced by passion, or the rapid occurrences of an engrossing world. Could persuasion touch the soul with such a mighty influence as would energize or overawe in solitude or society, strong hopes might be entertained of lasting benefit; but while the moral sense is so little affected, that the person is disposed to fight against his conviction of right, he will not turn from the error of his way into the path of virtue and happiness. Though he

clearly perceives the goodness of your counsel and readily confesses the kindness of your motives, yet his conscience is not firmly engaged on the side of religion, and he goes out into the scenes of business, or vice, and wears his former character, or becomes more hardened in crime. Thus he verifies our motto in his conduct, and furnishes lamentable proof, that moral suasion is frequently ineffectual. Facts of this kind, which every day's remark presents to our alarmed vision, should excite us to the most unremitting watchfulness over our hearts, and to the most devoted exertions in favor of these, who are yet struggling between the solicitations of appetite and the solemn monitions of God. We should pray over their broken vows, their blighted hopes, their weeping families and the moral desolation of their hearts, in a manner the most tender and penetrating, till their souls shall thrill with horror at the dreadfulness of their crimes against God, and the fearfulness of their exposure to near, to impending ruin. We should point out with clearness and emphasis those, who have passed their days and nights in deep and withering guilt, and who have carried the burning furnace of hell in their bosoms in the seasons of affected gaiety, but of real torment. In this way, should God bless our endeavors, we may rouse them from insensibility to their awful situation, and lead them from the terribleness of sin to the light, life and joy of religion, to the smile, love and enjoyment of God. Should our exertions fail of reclaiming them, we shall reap the approval of Heaven, and experience greater attachment to holiness, and stronger abomination of sin. But every person, who undertakes this glorious work, should first know the state of his own soul; lest, misapprehending his true condition, he should need the counsel he intended to give, and the reformation he designed to effect, and thereby expose the cause to disgrace, and induce the abandoned to say, physician, heal thyself. It should be distinctly remembered, that reproofing others does not sweeten our temper, or render our moral perception more clear, unless we enter on this sacred employment in the right spirit, and persevere with enlightened zeal. For we are extremely apt to deceive ourselves on this point, and to fancy our transgressions are bleached into spotless virtue by the severity we display in reprehending the faults and censuring the bitterness of those around us. Against this propensity to conceal our hearts from our own inspection, by inveighing against the sin of others, we should most scrupulously guard, as it is an unsuspected, though a most certain road to perdition. For when we are conscious of our own turpitude, and yet are resolved to upbraid others, that we may avoid the sting of a guilty heart, it is evident we prefer temporary relief, and the semblance of a pure character, to radical and unfeigned repentance. In this case, we detest the wrong in others which we practise, and neither do right, nor encourage the wavering to choose the path of truth and holiness.

When people condemn that which they are constantly doing, without possessing sufficient strength of moral prin-

ciple to adopt the course of action which they approve, their condition is most deplorable, as they are continually grieved by self-condemnation, and yet disinclined, either by the feebleness of purpose, or the strong power of habit from choosing the way that God, reason and conscience designate. Such persons may fancy time will bring the desired change, and that as they advance in life, they shall increase in wisdom and purity; but each day will urge the example of the past, and they may resolve, and re-resolve, and die the same. The importance of commencing the work of reformation to-day is hence strikingly obvious, and it should be undertaken with a firmness of purpose, which no scorn can weaken, no habits enfeeble, no difficulties overcome. For a sneering world, a depraved heart and numerous impediments to a thorough reformation of life will plead for indecision and delay with complete success, if a resolution be not formed, which, with the blessing of God, will gain strength by opposition, and finally triumph over all obstacles. Unless people will come to this determination, they have the awful prospect of spending the residue of their years in a struggle between reason and vitiated appetite, and of knowing they are daily becoming more complete vassals of evil habits, and that they are constantly sinking deeper in the gulf of perdition. If this be the unavoidable consequence of irresolution, can any one repeat our motto, or reflect on the sentiment it contains, without applying its teaching to his own heart, or asking, shall I continue to grow worse and still worse till I mingle with the dust of the urn, and is the happiest portion of my life gone? Lest habit, reproach and the disinclination of a heart fond of repose bring us to this melancholy conclusion, let us pour out our souls in prayer to God for assistance in the great and glorious enterprise of reformation, and concentrate our every power to accomplish a work, which shall rejoice our hearts and conform us to God. Should we not thus resolve, the blackness of darkness will constitute the brightness and beauty of our future prospect; but should we determine, with the blessing of Heaven, to amend our ways, and to cherish a better spirit, our moral and intellectual elevation will constantly increase, and the smile of an approving God impart the emblem and earnest of the immortal paradise.

#### SABINE'S GOD.

Mr. Sabine, in his Lectures against Balfour's Inquiry has the following sentence concerning the parable of the rich man and Lazarus; "Here they have God's word, and if men would have everlasting life, they must believe it, and live in the practice of it, or go to the unseen world, to know that the 'jealousy' of an offended God 'is as cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire which hath a most vehement flame.'" Human imagination, aided, or unassisted, can form no conception of a being more cruel than the grave, as that spares nothing, and yet we are formally told by a professed lover of God, that he is as cruel as the grave, although the scriptures repeatedly and with

strong emphasis declare, that he is *love*, and that his *mercy* endureth forever. It may be said that it is only the *jealousy* of an offended God which is as *cruel* as the grave. But as all men, according to Calvinism, are born into this world under the wrath and curse of God, they might as reasonably plead with death and the grave to restore their buried friends, as supplicate God for a single favor, for he is just as much inclined to bless, as the earth is disposed to give up the dead. We have frequently heard of the self-inflicted tortures endured by the worshippers of Juggernaut and his kindred devils, but in no instance has it been intimated or even suspected that these *Gods* were as *cruel* as the grave; but when the *true* God, the *Father of mercies* is to be characterized, words are too faint and too few to describe his *cruelty*, as he is infinite in all his *perfections*. It must certainly be a glorious undertaking to turn men from the worship of idols, that can neither see, hear nor injure their devotees, to the adoration of an offended God, who is as *cruel* as the grave, as inexorable as death; and such a *heavenly* enterprise demands all the gold, silver, tears, prayers, and efforts of a sympathizing universe.

It is this strange misconception of God's character that has darkened our earth with the leaden clouds of despair, repelled thousands from a belief in christianity and sent heathens to their temples with a firmer persuasion that they would be infinite losers, should they abandon the gods of their fathers. And shall a *christian* minister, in this enlightened age and land, be allowed to slander his Creator in this outrageous manner without notice? if the *christian* public can witness this gross aspersion on the character of a holy and gracious Father and remain silent, they are dastardly cowards, or traitors against Heaven, as they tacitly admit that their *only* Friend is a

'God partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,  
Whose attributes are *rage, revenge, or lust.*'

If any person can read Mr. Sabine's assertion without feeling his ears tingle and his heart ache, he must think there is little choice in gods, and that it is as proper to worship the Grand Lama, or Juggernaut, as a *being*, who is as *cruel* as the grave!

### QUESTIONS.

1. If God created all men for happiness, what will prevent the completion of his design? as he possesses all wisdom, power and goodness, works all things after the counsel of his own will and does whatever his soul desires.
2. If he created a part for misery, why does he pretend to offer them felicity? as the wisdom of Heaven is without partiality or hypocrisy, and as with God there is no respect of persons.
3. If he created all for heaven, but knows that only a part will enjoy it, why does he involve his conduct in inconsistency, by striving to save those from ruin, whom he knows he can never benefit?

### WISDOM.

*Her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace.—Prov. III. 17.*

That wisdom which leads young people to seek the knowledge and love of God, and to walk in the ways of

practical piety, is the principal thing. The happiness it affords should lead them to diligence in seeking it. The thoughtless and dissipated discover no beauty, no loveliness in the way of piety; although its ways are ways of pleasantness, and its paths are peace. The practice of piety conduces to health of body, to peace of mind, to social comfort; it adds a loveliness, and gives a charm to all the comforts of life; it is attended with safe and comfortable hopes of heaven; it soothes the sorrows of sickness, pain and losses; it extracts the sting of death and banishes the dread of the grave; it presents the most just and lovely views of the excellencies of the divine character, the justice of his government, and felicities of his children.—Those who walk in this way in the exercise of faith, prayer, and watchfulness, are enamoured of its beauties. They can testify that "Religion never was designed to make our pleasures less."

*A plain and short road to a good destiny.*—Be studious, and you will be learned—Be industrious and frugal, and you will be rich—Be sober and temperate, and you will be healthy—Be virtuous, and you will be happy.

*A rule which nobody should forget.*—Speak as seldom and as little as may be, either for yourself, or of yourself; but let your character speak for you. Whatever *that* says will be believed; but what you say in commendation of your own character, instead of being believed, will but render you ridiculous.

## PROPOSALS

BY

J. T. BEEBE,

FOR PUBLISHING BY SUBSCRIPTION  
**A COURSE OF LECTURES, IN THIRTEEN NUMBERS,**

ON THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS:

1. The character of God.
2. His object in the creation of man.
3. The strength, wisdom, goodness and certainty of his every purpose.
4. Original Sin.
5. Total Depravity.
6. Vicarious suffering, or imputed guilt and righteousness.
7. Election and Reprobation.
8. The unity of God.
9. The character of Christ.
10. The object of his mission.
11. The success of his undertaking.
12. The homage of heart and life due to God for the love, wisdom and power displayed in creation, providence and grace.
13. The morality of the gospel, or the religion of christians.

BY REV. JOHN RISSE, JR.

Who is now delivering the above Lectures in the UNIVERSALIST CHURCH in this City. The course will probably be completed in April or May, and the Lectures will be printed as soon as possible after delivery. They will be printed on good paper and afforded to subscribers for 12 1-2 cents each number.

The above work will probably contain about 200 pages (octavo,) and will be put to press as soon as a sufficient number of subscribers shall be obtained to warrant the undertaking.

Persons holding subscriptions for the above work, are requested to forward them to the publisher by the 15th of May next.

N. B.—Should there be three hundred subscribers to the above work, it will be sold for ONE DOLLAR.  
Hartford, March 12th. 1827.



## POETRY.



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 "Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord."  
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[SELECTED.]

In the following lines the conception of the being and the power of the ALMIGHTY, are great and august, and expressed in language elegant and sublime.

Hail! Sov'reign Goodness! infinite and free;  
 Thine eye the light, thy span immensity!  
 Thyself the centre, and creation's soul!  
 Whose vast circumference circumscribes the whole;  
 Extends o'er all its penetrating sway,  
 And kindles darkness, or puts out the day.  
 From whom conceal'd no secret thought can rise,  
 Escape thy notice, or deceive thine eyes,  
 Known ere its birth, known ere in embryo warm'd,  
 By words depicted or in action form'd;  
 Trac'd from its point thy spirit marks its course,  
 Directs its motion, or repels its force.  
 To gain some end, or frustrate some design,  
 Alike thy justice, and thy love combine.  
 Searcher of hearts! to thee are equal known  
 The mind of millions, as the mind of one.  
 Who would not fear, who would not kiss thy hand?  
 Fall at thy word, or rise at thy command?

*To the Invisible Author of Nature.*

Thy hand unseen sustains the poles  
 On which this vast creation rolls,  
 The starry arch proclaims thy pow'r,  
 Thy pencil glows in every flower:  
 In thousand shapes and colours rise  
 Thy painted wonders to our eyes:  
 While beasts and birds with lab'ring throats  
 Teach us a God in thousand notes:  
 The meanest pin in nature's frame  
 Marks out some letter of thy name.  
 Where sense can reach or fancy rove,  
 From hill to hill, from field to grove,  
 Across the waves, around the sky,  
 There's not a spot, or deep or high,  
 Where the Creator has not trod,  
 And left the footsteps of a God.

## SORROW.

Oh sacred sorrow, by whom souls are tried,  
 Sent not to punish mortals, but to guide;  
 If thou art mine (and who shall proudly dare  
 To tell his Maker he has had his share?)  
 Still let me feel for what thy pangs are sent,  
 And be my guide, and not my punishment.

## MARRIED,

In this city, Mr. James M. Brace to Miss Esther Warren.  
 At Glastenbury, Mr. Wm. Sparks to Miss Emelia Wadsworth.

## DIED,

In this city, Capt. Alexander Morgan, aged 53, formerly of Greenfield, Mass.

Mrs. Mary Gannett, wife of John M. Gannett, Esq.

In New-Haven on the 7th inst. Mr. JOHN C. GRAY, of a pulmonary affection, aged 47. M. Gray was a native of Boston, but has been a resident of this State for upwards of twenty years. Though unfortunate in the operations of business, he has been universally esteemed as an upright man—conscientious in his principles, honest in his dealings, and kind and inoffensive in his deportment. He was formerly one of the editors and proprietors of this paper, the mechanical branch of which he continued to manage until his last illness. His loss will be deeply regretted by all his friends, and particularly by two orphans, who are deprived of a kind and indulgent father, and left to the protection of the world and the orphan's friend.—*Herald.*

## BOOKS

FOR SALE AT THIS OFFICE.

KNEELAND'S Translation of the New Testament.

- Do. Lectures (2d edition)
- Do. Pronouncing Spelling Book.
- Do. Universalist Magazine, (2 vols.)
- Do. Christian Messenger, (2 Vols.)

BALLOU'S Lectures.

- Do. Eleven Sermons.
- Christ an Repository, (3 vols.)
- Unitarian Miscellany, (6 vols.)

HYMN BOOK used at the Universalist Church in this City.  
 Discussion between A. Kneeland and W. L. McCalla.

*The following Pamphlets have just been received, and are for sale at this office:*

Essays and Tracts in Theology, by Jared Sparks, No. 9;  
 Reasons offered by Samuel Eddy, for his Opinions, to the First Baptist Church in Providence, from which he was compelled to withdraw for Heterodoxy; An Answer to the Inquiry, "What is Religion?"; The Brothers, or Consequences, a Story of what happens every day, with an Account of Savings Banks; Devotional Exercises for the use of Young Persons, containing Reflections and a Prayer for each morning in the week, by Charles Wellbeloved; Channing's Sermon at the Ordination of the Rev. Jared Sparks, to the pastoral care of the First Independent Church in Baltimore; Ware's Sermon at the Ordination of the Rev. Wm. Ware, to the pastoral charge of the First Congregational Church in New-York; The True Messiah Exalted, or Jesus Christ really the Son of God, vindicated, in three letters to a Presbyterian Minister, by David Millard; An Orthodox Drama, or Dialogue between Calvin, Hopkins, and Arminius; The Non-personality of the Devil, by Henry Fitz; Fitz's Reply to Crowell's Strictures on the doctrine of Universal Salvation; Mystery of Revelation unfolded, in two discourses on Rev. xx. 10, 12; The Badge, a Moral Tale for Children; The Force of Prejudice; Remarks on Dr. Griffin's Requisition for 700,000 Ministers; Sin against the Holy Ghost, by Geo. B. Lisher; A Discourse, delivered at the United States' Chapel, Springfield, (Ms.)—by David Pickering; A luminous discourse on the "Coming of Christ," from 2 Thess. i. 6, 10, by Rev. J. S. Thompson, recently of the Methodist Persuasion; Pope's Essay on Man.

☞ All Communications for the INQUIRER must be addressed to the Editor; and all letters on business, to the Publisher, (*post paid*).

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